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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

7 May 1968

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Poles Protest in Prague

The Polish regime's concern over recent developments in Czechoslovakia escalated on 6 May into a formal protest against alleged distortions in Czechoslovak public media coverage of recent events in Poland. The Polish ambassador in Prague delivered identical protest notes to the Czechoslovak party central committee and to the office of the Premier. The content of the notes was not made public.

On 4 May, Polish and Soviet correspondents accompanied by their respective ambassadors in Prague met at the Polish cultural center there, presumably to coordinate what might become a joint propaganda campaign against Czechoslovak "distortions." Since 4 May, articles openly critical of Czechoslovakia have appeared in the Polish press.

Meanwhile, the Czechoslovak ambassador in Warsaw held a press conference on 6 May where he downplayed his country's problems with its neighbors, saying that the "processes taking place in Czechoslovakia are still developing." In a veiled dig at the controlled Polish press, he asserted that "it is essential to differentiate between the attitude of the Czechoslovak party and government, and other views expressed in public, especially in the press, radio and television."

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East Germans Jam Czechoslovak Broadcasts

The German-language transmissions of Czechoslovak Radio were jammed by the the East Germans during a rare outburst of polemics last March.

The jamming came in the wake of East German politburo member Hager's attack on the new Czechoslovak regime, and was designed to insulate the East German public from the storm of protest within Czechoslovakia. According to radio technicians in Prague, the Czechoslovak station at Usti nad Labem was broadcasting angry newspaper editorials into East Germany. The Bulgarians and Poles have also been accused of jamming Radio Prague during the critical days of March.

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EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC
DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

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According to Czechoslovak Radio officials, the interior ministry has promised that Czechoslovakia's own jamming operations would cease shortly. But this calls for legislation and would take some time to pass the National Assembly. RFE and Radio Madrid are jammed in Czechoslovakia. [redacted]

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Czechoslovakia Ceases Jamming All Radio Broadcasts--Except For RFE

Interior Minister Josef Pavel informed Czechoslovak and foreign journalists on 6 May that Prague has ceased all jamming of radio stations "except for some transmissions by Radio Free Europe, which Czechoslovakia does not regard as a radio station." Prague does not "recognize" RFE because it uses "unauthorized frequencies." [redacted]

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[redacted] the government is considering a proposal, based on economic considerations, that even RFE broadcasts cease to be jammed.

Pavel stated that all "bugging equipment" belonging to the Ministry of the Interior has been "abolished," and that censoring of mail from abroad will now be done in a regulated fashion so that recipients will know the mail has been opened. Pavel's statement on bugging, however, does not mean that electronic eavesdropping will cease in Czechoslovakia. Members of the counterintelligence service, replying to press criticism, have stated that their "bugging" must continue because of the presence of foreign intelligence "agents" in Czechoslovakia. [redacted]

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Luigi Longo In Prague

Italian Communist Party (PCI) leader Longo, accompanied by the editor of the party's daily Unita, arrived in the Czechoslovak capital on 5 May. The Embassy in Rome speculates that the visit stems principally from the PCI's desire to portray the party to Italian voters as aligned with the present Czechoslovak liberalization. The Dubcek leadership would be very pleased to learn of this assessment, particularly since they have pointed out that the "Prague Way" could usefully be emulated by Western European communist and socialist parties. The two parties probably will be concerned with

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more practical matters, however, such as the next preparatory conference leading to the Moscow meeting of world communist parties. The PCI and Czechoslovak party's views on these events are already very similar.

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Balkan Crop Prospects Dimmed by Severe Drought

The drought continues to be severe throughout the Balkans. According to a leading Rumanian agriculture official, cereal crop prospects are already irreparably hurt with only the extent of damage still in question. The official added that Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Italy are the most severely hurt, but the USSR is also suffering from the drought.

In Bulgaria hoarfrost is threatening to harm the crops already endangered by inadequate rainfall. Crop damage has not been estimated, but a major effort is underway to irrigate wheat and barley fields. Agricultural commodities are a major export for Bulgaria and if the situation does not improve Bulgaria's deteriorating balance of payments could worsen.

Although the Rumanian source conspicuously avoided indicating the level of Rumania's grain reserves, the regime has given priority during the last two record crop years to building up its reserves instead of exporting its surplus grains. According to some reports, the Rumanians have even refused to sell cereals to Moscow. Despite this year's poor prospects, the Rumanians probably are better prepared to weather the setback caused by the drought than some of their allies.

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The Ghost of Gotse Delchev

Dead or alive Gotse Delchev is a troublemaker. Killed on 4 May 1903 leading an insurrection against Turkish rule in the Balkans, Delchev has become embroiled in the Yugoslav-Bulgarian feud over Macedonia.

In connection with the 65th anniversary of his death the Bulgarian press has published articles claiming directly or indirectly that Delchev was a Bulgarian who fought for the liberation of the Bulgarian people. On 6 May Yugoslavia's

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news agency Tanyug lashed out at these articles for their de facto denial of the Macedonian nationality. A similar exchange took place in January 1967, the 95th anniversary of Delchev's birth, when the Bulgarian press referred to Delchev as a "Bulgarian patriot."

The current dispute occurs just as the dust is settling from a lengthy and bitter tirade over the territorial aspirations displayed in the Bulgarian press last winter. These articles were associated with the 90th anniversary of the Treaty of San Stefano which created a short-lived Bulgarian nation that included present day Macedonia. Officially both countries have tried to ignore the "Macedonian problem" but if the press attacks continue the bitter controversy may escalate to higher levels.

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High-Level Chinese Military Delegation in Albania

A large Chinese military delegation headed by a "high-level" official was in Albania in late March according to a report from the Italian embassy in Tirana.

We cannot confirm this report. In the past, the presence of Chinese military "advisors" in Albania has often coincided with special projects, such as the repair or overhauling of Albania's submarines, but this usually has not involved "high-level" Chinese.

If such a delegation was in Albania, it was probably there to evaluate Albania's military needs as well as reassure the Hoxha regime of continued Chinese support against growing Soviet military presence in the Mediterranean as well as against Albania's traditional enemies--Greece and Yugoslavia.

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Dubcek is Exhausted

Close associates of Czechoslovak party boss Dubcek are worried about his health.

Dubcek is suffering from exhaustion and might suffer a physical breakdown. The strain and workload which

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Dubcek has carried for the past few months have taken a heavy toll on his physical resources, and his friends are trying to persuade him to slow down.

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NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT
ONLY THE ANALYSIS OF THE EE DIVISION

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